

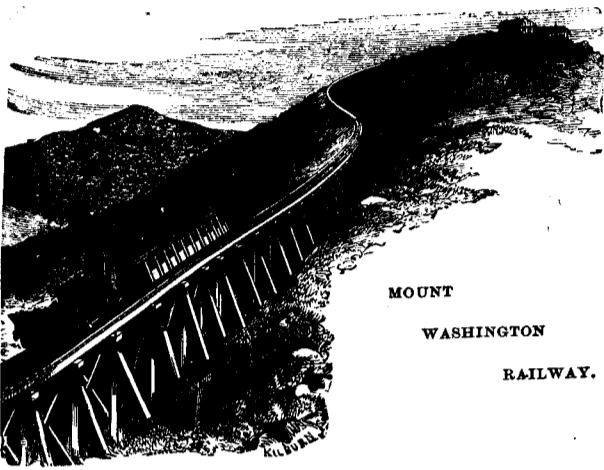
PLEASANT HOURS

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK.

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MOUNT
WASHINGTON
RAILWAY.

CLIMBING MOUNT WASHINGTON.

The ascent of Mount Washington, the monarch of the White Mountain range, is one of the notable events of a lifetime. This ascent can now be accomplished without the slightest fatigue. The most delicate invalid can now be carried swiftly and safely, where but a few years ago only the most vigorous tourist could with much fatigue and difficulty climb.

Mount Washington can, of course, be climbed by a nine mile walk from Crawford Notch, but most tourists in these degenerate times avail themselves of the facilities of the mountain railway, the first of the sort ever constructed.

It is nearly three miles long, and ascends 3,625 feet, starting from a point 2,668 feet above water-tide. The maximum grade is 1,980 feet to the mile, or a little more than one foot in three; while the average is very nearly one foot in four. Besides the usual rails, there is a centre rail of peculiar construction to receive the motive power. It consists of two bars of iron, with connecting cross-pieces at a distance of every four inches. A centre cog-wheel on the locomotive plays into this rail, and secures a sure and steady mode of ascent and descent.

The engine is not connected to the car, but simply pushes the car up the track. On the return it allows the car to follow it down at a low rate of speed. To protect the train from accident, a wrought-iron "dog" constantly plays into notches on the driving wheel, so that, if any part of the machinery gives way, the train is arrested where it is.

As you ascend the view widens and a broad vista of plain and mountain breaks upon the view. Gradually the trees of the temperate zone are left behind, and the shrubs and flora of Labrador and Greenland make their appearance. You can soon also see over the south wall, which so jealously limited your vision as you drove up the valley. Near the summit you have on the left of the track, the huge "Gulf of Mexico," an im-

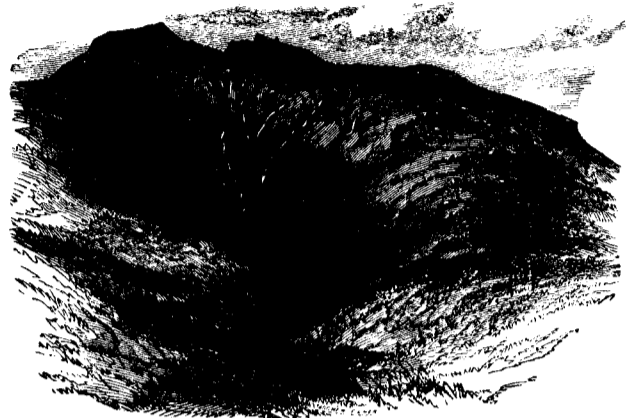
mense amphitheatre or ravine, down which you can look for an almost sheer descent of a thousand feet.

Many will think that the views during the ascent, which grow grander and grander as they rise, are more inspiring than the prospect from the peak above. The "Gulf of Mexico" gapes with more terror as the shadows from its walls, that measure more than a thousand feet, fall far into its base.

Since the completion of the railroad the summit has been occupied as a station of the Meteorological Department of the United States army, and observers have passed the entire winter there. The wind has sometimes assailed them with a velocity of one hundred miles per hour. The lowest point indicated by the thermometer, during the first year of observation, was -59° Fahrenheit. This extreme cold occurred at the same time with a high wind, which rendered it almost insupportable even indoors.

THE SUMMIT.

Let us ascend the last part of the steep cone, and stand upon the summit. What a magnificent and stupendous view! A horizon of nearly six hundred miles bounds the prospect! The mountain peaks stand on every side as sentinels over the furrowed valleys of New England! Far in the east Katahdin is driven like a wedge



THE "GULF OF MEXICO."

each little sheet of water was blanketed and tucked in beneath its own coverlet of cloud, to spend the night in undisturbed repose. Soon the Great Gulf, the deep ravines on either side, are filled with vapour, accumulating every moment. It seems as though one could walk across to Clay, Jefferson, Adams, and Madison upon this broad platform of mist.

Should this phenomenon occur before sunset, as sometimes it does, the effect is indescribably beautiful and grand, as though bridges of burnished gold had been thrown across the deep chasms from mountain top to mountain top. At early dawn the traveller is aroused to witness the reverse of the picture which he saw the previous evening. The sun comes up from the sea, the great pyramid of shadow beginning in the west gradually contracts, the little cloud blankets rise from the lakes and float away in the upper air, and the sun, "as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber," clothed in light, "rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race." After such an experience, one can go down into the plain below, better and wiser for his visit among the clouds.

RUNAWAY BOB.

SOME years ago a young lady in a manufacturing town in England gathered by her personal efforts a class of poor, rough boys into the Sunday-school. Among them was one, the most wretched and unpromising, named Bob. The superintendent of the school told these boys to come to his house during the week and he would give each of them a new suit of clothes. They came, and Bob with them, and received the garments.

After a Sunday or two Bob failed to appear at school. The teacher sought him out, and found his new clothes in rags and dirt. She invited him back to school. He came and the superintendent gave him a second suit. After a Sunday or two Bob's place was again

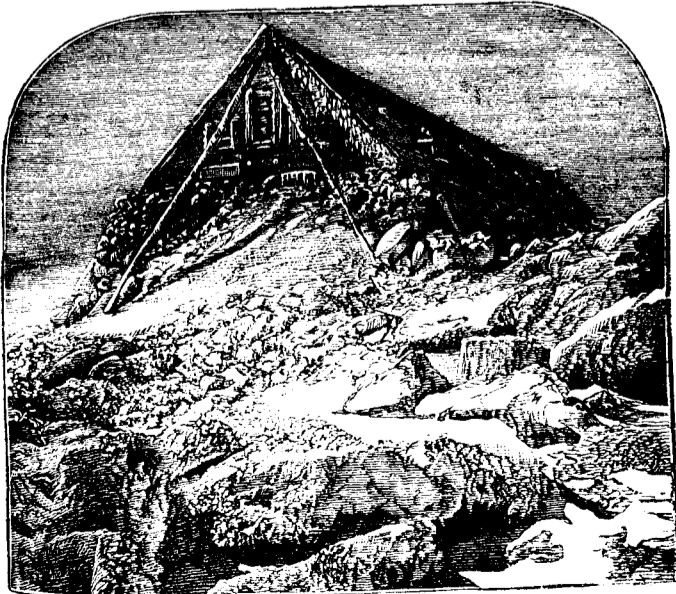


MOUNTS ADAMS AND MADISON, FROM GLEN PATH.

into the sky. Westward the eye roams almost to the Catskills; northward into Canada, far beyond the sources of the Connecticut; southward to the Saco. In a clear morning or evening, if there is a silvery gleam on the south-eastern horizon, it tells that the sun is shining on the sea off Portland. It is the map of New England printed before us in glowing poetry.

The old hotels, the "Tip-Top House" and the "Summit House," rough, uncouth structures, still remain to remind one of the slow advances of civilization a mile above the sea. At the New Mount Washington House the charge is \$6 per day, to correspond, we suppose, to the height of the mountain.

The sunset view is magnificent beyond description. The light is gradually softened during the afternoon, when the most exquisite views are obtained of all the surrounding country. As the sun slowly sinks in the west, the shadows of the mountains enlarge in proportions, and extend far and wide. The great pyramidal shadow of the summit travels along the eastern landscape, gradually darkening green fields, pleasant lakes, widening rivers, and the snug hamlets that line their shores, till, reaching the horizon, the apex actually seems to lift itself into the haze. The western mountains are glowing with golden light. The sun goes down in a blaze of glory. Then as the shadows deepen, the mists begin to collect on the surface of every lake, and pond, and brook, till it seems as though



THE TIP-TOP HOUSE—MOUNT WASHINGTON IN WINTER.



UP MOUNT WASHINGTON.